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Data Article

Comprehensive dataset of the medicinal plants used by a Tashelhit speaking community in the High Atlas, Morocco



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ABSTRACT

This dataset describes medicinal plants used in a poorly studied area of Morocco: the High Atlas mountains, inhabited by Ishelhin people, the southern Moroccan Amazigh (Berber) ethnic group, “An ethnomedicinal survey of a Tashelhit-speaking community in the High Atlas, Morocco” (Teixidor-Toneu et al., 2016) [1]. It includes a comprehensive list of the plants used in the commune, as well as details on the plant voucher specimens collected and a glossary of Tashelhit terminology relevant to the study. To collect the data, semi-structured and structured interviews were carried out, as well as focus group discussions. Free prior informed consent was obtained for all interactions. A hundred and six adults were interviewed and 2084 use reports were collected; a hundred fifty-one vernacular names corresponding to 159 botanical species were found.

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Specifications Table

Subject area	Ethnobotany, ethnomedicine
More specific sub- ject area	Medicinal plant use
Type of data	Tables
How data was acquired	Ethnobotanical surveys
Data format	Analysed
Experimental factors	Voucher specimens collected
Experimental features	Vernacular names, botanical names, voucher specimen details, plant source, plant parts used, mode of administration, additives, folk ailments and etic categories of use are reported, as well as values for standard ethnobotanical indexes.
Data source location	Rural commune of Imegdale, N'Fiss valley, High Atlas, Marrakech province, Morocco (approximate geographical coordinates 31.12 N, 8.14 W)
Data accessibility	Data is within this article

Value of the data

- These data can inform pharmacological search for new medicines from traditional knowledge repositories [2].
- These data identify culturally valuable species that can potentially be incorporated into rural development programs in the Maghreb [3].
- Plants listed are often over-harvested, this list can inform biodiversity conservation by highlighting species vulnerable due to human pressure on wild populations [3,4].
- These data can also be used in comparative studies about medicinal plant use (e.g., cross-cultural comparisons).

1. Data

The dataset presents a comprehensive inventory of the medicinal plants used by a Tashelhit-speaking community in the N'Fiss valley, including linguistic, ecological and ethnomedicinal data (High Atlas, Marrakech; [Supplementary Table S1](#)). Details for the herbarium specimens collected during the study and a comprehensive glossary of the Tashelhit vocabulary used are also provided ([Supplementary Table S2](#) and [Table 1](#)).

2. Experimental design, materials and methods

Fieldwork was conducted in the rural community of Imegdale, High Atlas, Morocco, between March and June 2015, as detailed in [1]. Ethical guidelines of the American Anthropological Association (2012), the Code of Ethics of the International Society of Ethnobiology (2006) and University of Reading ethical protocols were followed. Approval from the Ethics Committee of the School of Biological Sciences, University of Reading, was obtained (Research Ethics Project Submission SBS 14-15 05). In [Supplementary Table S1](#), quantitative data and relevant ethnobotanical indices are also presented for each plant, including the number of Use Reports (UR), the highest Fidelity Level [5] and Use Value [6,7].

Table 1

Glossary of folk ailments, related terms and mixture names. T stands for Tashelhit and MA for Moroccan Arabic.

Term	Language (s)	Meaning
'aeen	MA	Evil eye.
Ado	T	It literally means “wind”, believed to be responsible for several Otolaryngological and Respiratory ailments.
Alen	T	Eyes.
Asumid	T	Cold.
Atsirid	T	Wash, specifically of the urogenital area.
Azbar	T	Pain (can refer to muscular pain, menstrual cramps, stomach ache, etc.).
Bkhorr	T, MA	Fumigation. Also used to refer to the fumigant, incense burned on embers in an earthenware pot called <i>mjmar</i> (usually used to cook <i>tajine</i> on).
Boumzui	T, MA	Palpitations felt in the abdominal area due to lack of food or stress.
Bousfer	MA	Folk ailment usually translated as jaundice (due to yellow skin and eye coloration); from classical Arabic “asfar”, which means yellow.
Bouzlou	T	Sciatica.
Ch'aar	T	Hair.
Fqrдем	T, MA	Normally translated as anaemia, but also refers to general tiredness and lack of energy. The word comes from classical Arabic and refers to the medical condition of anaemia. It translates literally to “poverty of blood”.
Frigg	T, MA	Term used to describe the healing practice used by <i>ferraggat</i> , herbal healers that treat children and women's ailments, as well as of the specific mixture of plants used.
Immi	T	Mouth.
Iqdi	T	Child's ailment due to contact with “sorcery”. Called “shm” in Darija.
Imezguane	T	Ear, referring as well to “ear pain” (<i>Inghayi imezguane</i>).
Ishgaf	T, MA	Name given to a mixture of dried plants and animal parts used as incense to clean the ambience and heal when ailments are believed to be caused by sorcery.
Izoran	T	Roots. Generic name also given to a remedy that consists in a dried powdered mixture of roots.
Jerh	T	Injuries.
Klawi	T, MA	Kidneys. “Klua” in singular.
Kolshi	T, MA	Literally means “everything”, used to refer to plants used for all ailments.
Lariah	MA	It literally means “the winds”, but the word is used to refer to spirits and invisible forces. They are associated with jinni and could be associated with sorcery.
Meda	T, MA	Stomach, from classical Arabic.
Mrrara	T, MA	Gallbladder.
Msakhan	MA	The word derives from <i>skhon</i> , meaning “hot”; it refers to a mixture (mainly consisting of spices) of “hot” plants used to heal “cold” ailments as well as in general as a food flavouring.
Msrar	T	Intestines; as a folk category it includes constipation.
Lqabt	T, MA	Constipation.
Okhass	T	Tooth, referring to toothache (<i>inghayi okhass</i>).
Qwi	T, MA	Healing technique that consists of touching specific points of the body (normally around the joints, and on the back and abdominal areas) with a hot object. Usually a plant stem, dried and burned, is used. Alternatively a metal object can be used, either a sickle or a golden piece of jewellery.
Ruah	T, MA	Flu, congestion; due to “wind” (<i>ado</i>) or also “cold” (<i>asumid</i>).
Saht	MA	Literally, it means health and also strength, but it also refers to plants used to put on weight (as there is strong association between being heavy and being healthy).
Skar	T, MA	Diabetes. Literally, sugar.
Skhana	T, MA	Fever.
Shqeqa	MA	Migraine; also used to refer to headaches. From classical Arabic “shak”, which means to crack something.
Tafalda	T	Wart.
Taumist	T	Child's ailment believed to be caused by sorcery with symptoms similar to gastroenteritis.
Taqait	T	Child's ailment with symptoms similar to ear pain and tonsillitis.
Touqal	T, MA	Gastrointestinal intoxication due to eating food in a bad state or to poisoning (normally attributed to acts of sorcery).
Tuhut	T	Cough.

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Transparency document. Supplementary material

Transparency data associated with this article can be found in the online version at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2016.05.079>.

Appendix A. Supplementary material

Supplementary document associated with this article can be found in the online version at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2016.05.079>.

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